

BEFORE THE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

STATE OF WASHINGTON

SHARON MONROE (RABOIN),

Appellant,

v.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND  
INDUSTRIES,

Respondent.

Case No. ALLO-03-0015

ORDER OF THE BOARD FOLLOWING  
HEARING ON EXCEPTIONS TO THE  
DETERMINATION OF THE DIRECTOR

**Hearing on Exceptions.** This appeal came on for hearing before the Personnel Appeals Board, GERALD L. MORGEN, Vice Chair, and BUSSE NUTLEY, Member, on Appellant's exceptions to the Director's determination dated March 12, 2003. The hearing was held at the office of the Personnel Appeals Board in Olympia, Washington, on October 14, 2003. WALTER T. HUBBARD, Chair, did not participate in the hearing or in the decision in this matter.

**Appearances.** Appellant Sharon Monroe (Raboin) was present and appeared *pro se*. Respondent Department of Labor and Industries was represented by Sandi LaPalm, Classification Manager.

**Background.** Appellant submitted a Classification Questionnaire signed September 20, 2002, requesting that her Information Technology Applications Specialist 3 (ITAS3) position be reallocated to an Information Technology Applications Specialist 4 (ITAS4) classification. Ms. LaPalm and BJ Matthews, Human Resource Consultant, reviewed Appellant's request. On December 19, 2002, Ms. LaPalm issued a written decision denying Appellant's reallocation request.

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2 On January 14, 2003, Appellant filed for a review to the Director of Personnel asserting that her  
3 position should have been reallocated to the ITAS4 classification.

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5 On March 4, 2003, Paul Peterson, Director's Designee, conducted an allocation review. By letter  
6 dated March 12, 2003, Mr. Peterson informed Appellant that her position was properly allocated to  
7 the ITAS3 classification.

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9 On April 11, 2003, Appellant filed exceptions with the Personnel Appeals Board to the  
10 determination of the Department of Personnel.

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12 Appellant's position is located within the Application and Data Management Section of the  
13 Information Services Division. The purpose of the unit is to support agency systems and  
14 applications. Appellant's position is responsible for the N20 and the Endeavor module movement  
15 systems. Appellant also provides maintenance and support for the EOS and CEMS systems.

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17 **Summary of Appellant's Argument.** Appellant disagrees with the determination that her position  
18 is properly allocated to the ITAS3 classification. Appellant argues that the module movement  
19 systems do impact multiple business units because multiple business units would be affected if the  
20 programmers were not able to make modifications and enhancements. Appellant asserts that there  
21 are not pre-defined directions in her work methods except for what she has defined and documented  
22 on her own. Appellant contends that she is the subject matter expert at the Department of Labor  
23 and Industries for these systems and that there is no one on staff for her to consult with. Appellant  
24 argues that she may consult with the Department of Information Systems about hardware problems  
25 or the vendor about software problems, but she is responsible for keeping the software functioning  
26 correctly. Appellant asserts that she solves difficult, complex problems of which no one at her

1 agency has any experience. Appellant contends that the module movement systems are critical and  
2 her classification questionnaire matches the specifications for the ITAS4 classification.

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4 **Summary of Respondent's Argument.** Respondent argues the Department of Labor and  
5 Industries is responsible for determining how their applications, business functions, and geographic  
6 locations are defined, and they have met their responsibility to provide those definitions.  
7 Respondent asserts that information obtained during the review of Appellant's position did not  
8 support that her assignments involve a major application or multiple business functions.  
9 Respondent contends that Appellant's systems support other systems and applications that are  
10 defined as large. Respondent argues that Appellant's application systems are not defined by the  
11 agency as mission-critical to the department. Respondent asserts that Appellant is responsible for  
12 moderate risk applications and a large work group, and her position fits the ITAS3 job classification  
13 and is properly allocated at that level.

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15 **Primary Issue.** Whether the director's determination that Appellant's position is properly allocated  
16 to the ITAS3 classification should be affirmed.

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18 **Relevant Classifications.** Information Technology Applications Specialist 3, Class Code 03293;  
19 Information Technology Applications Specialist 4, Class Code 03294.

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21 **Decision of the Board.** The purpose of a position review is to determine which classification best  
22 describes the overall duties and responsibilities of a position. A position review is neither a  
23 measurement of the volume of work performed, nor an evaluation of the expertise with which that  
24 work is performed. Also, a position review is not a comparison of work performed by employees in  
25 similar positions. A position review is a comparison of the duties and responsibilities of a particular  
26 position to the available classification specifications. This review results in a determination of the

1 class which best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of the position. Liddle-Stamper v.  
2 Washington State University, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

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4 Appellant asks the Board to compare her position to other information technology positions at the  
5 Department of Labor and Industries. While a comparison of one position to another similar position  
6 may be useful in gaining a better understanding of the duties performed by and the level of  
7 responsibility assigned to an incumbent, allocation of a position must be based on the overall duties  
8 and responsibilities assigned to an individual position compared to the existing classifications. The  
9 allocation or misallocation of a similar position is not a determining factor in the appropriate  
10 allocation of a position. Flahaut v. Dept's of Personnel and Labor and Industries, PAB No. ALLO  
11 96-0009 (1996).

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13 Because a current and accurate description of a position's duties and responsibilities is documented  
14 in an approved classification questionnaire, the classification questionnaire becomes the basis for  
15 allocation of a position. An allocation determination must be based on the overall duties and  
16 responsibilities as documented in the classification questionnaire. Lawrence v. Dept of Social and  
17 Health Services, PAB No. ALLO-99-0027 (2000).

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19 The difference between the ITAS3 and ITAS4 classifications is based on the level of support and  
20 number of business functions impacted. For a position to be allocated to the Information  
21 Technology Applications Specialist 4 job classification, incumbents must be independently  
22 responsible for multiple applications of moderate size/complexity or a large, major application that  
23 is vital to program delivery. The Definition and Distinguishing Characteristics for the ITAS4  
24 classification state:

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2 Definition: Performs or leads analysis, consulting, design, programming, maintenance,  
3 and/or support for major applications, support products, projects, multi-functional databases  
or database management systems that impact multiple business units or functions.

4 Distinguishing Characteristics: This is the senior professional level. Incumbents are  
5 independently responsible for multiple applications of moderate size/complexity or a large,  
6 major application that is vital to program delivery. Staff at this level have advanced  
technical skill (e.g. a high degree of expertise in business consulting or modular component  
7 software construction, or an understanding of database technology on several platforms).  
Incumbents understand the business from the perspective of a senior business person and are  
8 conversant in the customer's business language. They have an awareness of impact across  
business units but not necessarily the entire agency. The focus and responsibility of this  
9 level is usually system specific, not agency-wide. Incumbents serve as a technical mentor  
and coach to others. Staff at this level often serve as a project leader. May supervise others.

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11 The record supports that the Director's Designee properly concluded that:

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- 13 • "Major applications and business units" are referenced in the specification for the ITAS4 job  
14 class and are the responsibility of the agency to define. Definitions may vary from agency  
to agency.
  - 15 • Appellant's assignments do not involve a major application or multiple business function.
  - 16 • Appellant's systems support larger systems and applications that are defined to be large,  
17 such as LIINIS. The major applications such as LIINIS impact multiple business functions.  
N2O, Endeavor, EOS, and CEMS are not so defined.
  - 18 • Appellant's applications do not rise to the level of "high risk" (mission critical to the  
19 department) as defined by the agency.
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21 Appellant has not met her burden of proving that her position meets the definition or distinguishing  
22 characteristics required for the ITAS4 job classification.

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1 The Definition and Distinguishing Characteristics for the ITAS3 classification state:

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3 Definition: Independently performs analysis, consulting, design, programming,  
4 maintenance, and/or support work for moderate risk applications, support products, projects,  
5 databases, or database management systems that impact one division, large work group or  
6 single business function.

7 Distinguishing Characteristics: This is the journey professional level where incumbents  
8 independently apply analysis, design, technical programming, data access/retrieval, database  
9 management, and problem solving skills to applications, projects and issues of moderate risk  
10 or impact. Incumbents are well versed in the tool sets, data access techniques, and the  
11 environment in which they work. Work methods employed and decisions reached are a  
12 combination of pre-defined directions and innovative approaches. Staff at this level have an  
13 operational knowledge of the customers' day-to-day business. Complex problems are  
14 resolved through consulting with a higher level technical staff. May serve as a technical  
15 mentor and coach to lower level staff. May lead or supervise others.

16 After reviewing the duties and responsibilities described in Appellant's classification questionnaire,  
17 we support the decision by the Director's Designee that Appellant's position best fits the ITAS3 job  
18 classification. We agree with the Director's Designee that Appellant is responsible for moderate  
19 risk applications and a large work group, and her position fits the ITAS3 job classification and is  
20 properly allocated at that level.  
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1 **Conclusion.** Appellant's position is best described by the Information Technology Applications  
2 Specialist 3 classification. The appeal on exceptions should be denied and the Director's  
3 determination dated March 12, 2003, should be affirmed.

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5 **ORDER**

6 NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the appeal on exceptions by Appellant is  
7 denied and the Director's determination dated March 12, 2003, is affirmed. A copy is attached.

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9 DATED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2003.

10 WASHINGTON STATE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

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13 Gerald L. Morgen, Vice Chair

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15 Busse Nutley, Member